4 APR 1980

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MEMORANDUM FOR: STIC Secretariat

FROM   :   Clarus W. Rice
                   Director of Central Reference

DA QA/QC:
03/14/00. SY

SUBJECT   :   Comments on Draft Paper on STAP Options for SAFE

1.   It is difficult to comment in depth on all of the concepts in the STAP options for SAFE paper within the two days allowed for review. The observations that follow are based on a quick review of a paper that proposes a major directional change in SAFE system design. OCR's problems with the paper are (a) the recommendations to expand SAFE at this time to the entire Community, (b) the recommendations to delay SAFE for the purpose of gathering additional user data through a pilot system created from Interim SAFE, and (c) the lack of any demonstrated proof that the new approach is superior to the current one.

Community SAFE

2.   STAP has characterized SAFE as "a large and intimidating R&D effort." We believe that expansion of the current design beyond CIA and DIA to include the Community at this time would compound this R&D challenge and jeopardize eventual success of the system, not only for those two agencies but eventually for the Community. The paper as written does not make a strong case for Community involvement now except to note that strengthening of Community management of SAFE is essential "if it is to become effective in satisfying prescribed functions," and that a direct COINS link "will enable study and experimentation by analysts in Community-wide access and retrieval." Further, pointing out a need for an ADP-Communications Community manager and the need for SAFE to be integrated into an overall Community architecture do not belong in a SAFE options paper. It may be desirable to have a Community ADP-Communications manager, but that is an entirely separate issue. It is unrealistic to criticize SAFE for not being part of an overall Community architecture when no such architecture exists. Judging from past experiences, it would take at least another five to seven years to design such an architecture. NFAC analysts can't wait that long for a SAFE system to assist them in improving intelligence analysis and production.

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3. We believe that the current development approach <u>will provide</u> the base for a future Community system. Our experience to date with DIA requirements indicate that many are already being met by the requirements previously established by CIA. Since SAFE involves basic general purpose analytical tools, it is our opinion that a major SAFE re-design would not be required to expand the system to the Community. The Community needs will be met with the current approach.

A True Pilot SAFE

4. The recommendations for a pilot system consisting of an improved Interim SAFE fail to take into account the long history of how CIA SAFE requirements were originally generated and how they have been refined, verified, and amended over the past six years. It is true that in a true "engineering" sense the Interim SAFE system is not a true operational model of the final system, but Interim SAFE itself evolved from an initial pilot system that was designed to determine if analysts could use on-line computer services to support their day-to-day operations. NFAC analysts became so enthused about the Interim System that they convinced the DCI and other senior Agency management of the need for SAFE (an interesting human factors experience for management not mentioned by STAP). NFAC analysts also convinced management to retain and expand the Interim System until full SAFE could be developed. The basic requirements for SAFE, at least as far as NFAC analysts are concerned, have been verified and expanded by surveys, workshops, direct analytical contacts, an extensive SAFE user network, testing and evaluation of SAFE concepts in a SAFE test lab, and extensive customer/ contractor interaction. DIA SAFE requirements have been "folded" into CIA SAFE's requirements and DIA is participating in tests in the SAFE test lab.

5. We do not take issue with the STAP statement that modifications to SAFE will become manifest with "the transition of naive users to experienced ones," and that new requirements will emerge from experienced usage. We have already seen evidence of this in NFAC's use of Interim SAFE. Flexibility in function and performance is a basic requirement in the SAFE design and is being monitored by ODP's CSPO. Such changes will occur even under the new pilot SAFE proposed by STAP. Change is inherent in any ADP system once users become acquainted with its power and begin clamoring for changes. In the past 13 years the OCR AEGIS system first built in 1967 has undergone massive changes to adapt to user satisfaction and dissatisfaction.

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6.   The STAP options paper also overlooks:

(a) The impact on NFAC analysts who have been told that a SAFE that they requested and participated in defining over the past six years is no longer valid. It is difficult to see how their enthusiasm is going to be "built up" for another series of pilot experimentations and data gathering;

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(b) The impact on the current SAFE development organization within OCR, ODP███████which is just beginning to "jell;"

(c) The impact on future funding from OMB and Congress not only for an "expanded" Interim but also for a much larger and expensive Community SAFE somewhere in the future;

(d) DIA involvement and funding to date in the Project and its long term plans within DoD involving SAFE;

(e) The critical requirement of making SAFE functions available to a suitable number of NFAC analysts in the near term;

(f) The proposal that CIA made over a year ago to the Community for on-line access to its current RECON data base. This will provide Community experience sooner than the proposed pilot. The RECON data base is the equivalent to the central public file within the SAFE system. It is this large central file that would be the major Community resource.

7.   In our opinion, the STAP option to change SAFE strategies is extremely unwise. The option does not offer a solution that will not also contain many of the problems that we now face in the current SAFE system design and a new pilot system will most likely surface more requirements but not all the requirements that experienced users generate against a system once it is fully operational. Any major revision of

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the existing ███████ will waste large amounts of the funding already expended. Finally, the approach recommended by STAP was much like the original development plan for SAFE, but it was discarded by senior Agency managers in favor of the current approach.

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